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611.54231/7-2576
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FOREIGN SERVICE DESPATCH

FROM : **Ambassador BERG**
TO : **THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE, WASHINGTON.**
REF :

DESP. NO.

July 2, 1957
DATE

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SUBJECT: **Communiqué on Interhandel**

The Political Department issued a communiqué on June 28, 1957 relative to two letters it had received concerning the Interhandel case. One letter was from Mr. Hermann Abs, who was in charge on the German side of the negotiations with the United States on the liberation of German assets. The other letter is from the liquidators of I. G. Farben.

According to the communiqué, Mr. Abs stated in his letter that, although General Aniline and Film Corporation was not German property, there are some debts which are owed by Interhandel to I. G. Farben. The second letter, from the liquidators of I. G. Farben, according to the communiqué relates to an investigation underway concerning possible debts owed I. G. Farben by Interhandel and indicates that legal proceedings are being initiated in order to obtain information indicating whether such debts exist.

The subject communiqué is attached in informal translation. It will be noted that the communiqué concludes that the subject letters are now being studied by the Government, but do not appear to contain information which would modify the Federal Council's opinion on the Interhandel case.

For the Ambassador:

E. Allen Fidel
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Counselor of Embassy
for Economic Affairs

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Enclosure:

Informal translation of Communiqué on Interhandel.

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From Barn

INFORMAL TRANSLATION

The Case of Interhandel

During these last days the Political Department has received two letters concerning the Interhandel case, one written by Mr. Hermann Abs, who had been charged two years ago by the German Government to negotiate with the United States on the liberation of the German assets sequestered in the latter country; the other from the liquidators of I. G. Farben.

In 1955, Mr. Abs declared that the General Aniline and Film Corporation could not and would not be claimed as German property, as the shares of this society sequestered in the United States belonged to the purely Swiss firm Interhandel in Basel, and were therefore Swiss property. In his letter, Mr. Abs states that following discussions which took place in Switzerland between the Administrative Council of Interhandel and the shareholders of the opposition, and also in the press, the liquidators of I. G. Farben have made enquiries which seem to show that I. G. Farben might still have some debts outstanding from Interhandel. Mr. Abs, however, does not disclaim his previous statements concerning the Swiss nature of Interhandel, but specifies that I. G. Farben has no claims to present, either against the American Government or against Interhandel as far as the latter's participation in GAF is concerned.

The second letter, written by the liquidators of I. G. Farben, explains that they are investigating at present if I. G. Farben has any debts outstanding from Interhandel and make known their intention of starting a legal procedure in order to obtain in this manner the information which would allow them to determine whether such debts exist. The liquidators make no legal claims on either GAF or the share capital of Interhandel, but claim debts resulting from transactions handled by Interhandel or the bank Sturzenegger on behalf of I. G. Farben.

Interhandel, which has received from the liquidators of I. G. Farben copies of these two letters, has informed the Political Department that it contests the existence of such debts.

The two letters are at the present moment the object of study. However, they do not appear to be of a nature to modify the point of view defended by the Federal Council against the American authorities in order to protect the legitimate Swiss interests.

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